6: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1937 FE11 Tallensi FE11

typical both of the particular magic and of all Tallensi magico-religious rites—but also many variations in the rites, the apparatus, and the personnel, from instance to instance. Morphologically, the essential and recurrent constituents of every magical rite are the apparatus (*bayar*), the medicine (*tiim*), the sacrifice (*kaab*, vb.), and the invocation (*ka*). The fetish mobilised in this situation is a *Ba'ar*, which may be translated as *Clamp*. Its material vehicle (the *bayar*) usually comprises a medicine pot, a tree stump, and a large stone, at the owner's house, together with some portable objects such as a cow's tail and an axe shaft encased in crocodile skin and greasy with the blood of sacrifices and anointings of medicine. These are brought along to the river and have obvious symbolic reference to the notion of the *Ba'ar* as holding down or inhibiting dangerous creatures and men, just as an axe-head is tightly clamped on to the shaft.[1] The magical performance *in situ* is the culmination of a series of magical and religious rites commenced earlier in the day or even on the previous day at the houses of the owner of the pool and of the magical specialist. A day or two in advance, the owner of the pool, assisted by elders of his family, consults a diviner to discover what sacrifices to make to his ancestor spirits in order that nothing untoward should spoil the fishing. He will learn also what animals to provide for the sacrifices to be made by the magical specialist. Usually it will be a number of chickens. In the special circumstances of the *Bolgraana's* first fishing expedition he had to give a goat to be sacrificed by the owner of the fetish. The latter sacrifices at his own compound where he prepares the medicines—roots, bark or twigs of several species of trees. The rest of the magical rites can be observed at the fishing pool. The rites are private, performed without the cognizance of, or any display of interest by, the multitude assembled for the fishing. Those who happen to be near pay no attention, even when they are not asked to move off. This is characteristic of Tallensi magic, ownership of which is inviolable.

The officiant mixes some millet-flour in a calabashful of water scooped from the pool to be fished and begins to recite his invocation in a low and hortatory voice. He addresses the *bayar*, the material objects dedicated to the ancestor who originally possessed the magic. His invocation is not a fixed spell. He improvises according to his gifts and experience. But the theme and the manner of the invocation are stereotyped. He calls upon his male ancestors by name in ascendant order, stressing particularly the original owner of the magic by frequently calling his name in the course of his invocation. He explains the occasion, and half entreating half commanding, exhorts them to drive crocodiles and dangerous fish into their holes or out of the pool so that no one should be injured, to prevent fighting between the people about to enter the water, and to give them a good catch. There is much repetition in the invocation and the officiant is constantly prompted by his co-adjutors. Calling upon his ancestors to come and accept the sacrifice, he pours some of the flour water on to the *bayar* objects or directly into the

[1] Note the distinction: *bayar* is the generic term for every kind of sacred object: *Ba'ar* is the name of this particular fetish.